**1880**

January 1, 1880 - The construction of the Panama Canal begins under French auspices, although its eventually failure on the sea level canal in 1893, would be bought out by the United States twenty-four years later under President Theodore Roosevelt.

November 1880 - James A. Garfield, Republican is elected president over Winfield S. Hancock, the Democratic candidate.  Garfield receives 214 Electoral College votes to 155 for Hancock, but barely wins the popular vote with a majority of only 7,023 voters.

**1881**

May 21, 1881 - The American Red Cross names Clara Barton president, a post she would hold until 1904 through nineteen relief missions.

July 2, 1881 - The 20th President of the United States, James A. Garfield, is shot by lawyer Charles J. Guiteau in the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad station in Washington, D.C.  He would die two months later on September 19, 1881 from an infection and be succeeded in the presidency by Vice President Chester Arthur on September 20.

July 4, 1881 - The Tuskegee Institute for black students training to be teachers was opened under the tutelage of Booker T. Washington as instructor in Tuskegee, Alabama.

October 26, 1881 - The gunfight at the O.K. Corral in Tombstone, Arizona occurs in a livery stable lot between some of the famous characters of the American west; Sheriff Wyatt Earp, his brother Virgil, and Doc Holliday against Billy Claiborne, Frank and Tom McLaury and the Clanton brothers Billy and Ike.

**1882**

March 22, 1882 - The practice of polygamy is outlawed by legislation in the United States Congress.

April 3, 1882 - Western outlaw Jesse James is shot to death by Robert Ford, a member of his own band, for a $5,000 reward.  The Ford brothers had been recruited to rob the Platte City Bank, but opted to try to collect the reward for their infamous leader.

**1883**

February 28, 1883 - Vaudeville, the entertainment and theatrical phenomena, begins when the first theatre is opened in Boston, Massachusetts.

May 24, 1883 - The Brooklyn Bridge is opened.  It was constructed under a design by German-American Johann A. Roebling and required fourteen years to build.  Six days later, a stampede of people fearing a rumor about its impending collapse causes twelve people to be killed.

November 18, 1883 - Five standard time zones are established by the United States and Canadian railroad companies to end the confusion over thousands of local time zones.

**1884**

May 1, 1884 - The Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions in the U.S.A. call for an eight-hour workday.

The first post season games in baseball were held between the National League and the American Association.

November 4, 1884 - Grover Cleveland is elected president

**1885**

February 21, 1885 - The [Washington](http://americasbesthistory.com/abh-washington.html) Monument is dedicated.

June 17, 1885 - The Statue of Liberty arrived for the first time in New York harbor.

September 2, 1885 - The Rockey Spring, Wyoming mining incident occurs when one hundred and fifty white miners attack Chinese coworkers, killing twenty-eight and forcing several hundred more to leave Rock Springs.

**1886**

January 20, 1886 - Thomas A. Edison builds a new laboratory for his experiments and inventions near his new home in West Orange, New Jersey

May 4, 1886 - The Haymarket riot and bombing occurs in Chicago, Illinois, three days after the start of a general strike in the United States that pushed for an eight hour workday.

May 8, 1886 - Dr. John Pemberton, a Georgia pharmacist, invents coca-cola, a carbonated beverage

June 2, 1886 - President Grover Cleveland marries Francis Folsom in the White House Blue Room, the sole marriage of a president within the District of Columbia mansion during the history of the United States.

September 4, 1886 - At Fort Bowie in southeastern Arizona, Geronimo and his band of Apaches surrender to Brigadier General Nelson A. Miles.  This signaled the end of warfare between the United States Army and Indian tribes.

**1887**

February 2, 1887 - The first Groundhog Day is observed in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, and the tradition of checking the shadow of a groudhog to predict the coming spring began.

October 8, 1887 - Naturalized as a citizen in 1881, Emile Berliner is granted a patent for the gramophone.

**1888**

March 11-14, 1888 - The eastern section of the United States undergoes a great snow storm, killing four hundred people.

June 16, 1888 - The prototype for the commercial phonograph is completed by Thomas A. Edison and staff

October 8, 1888 - Work begins on the first motion picture camera at Thomas A. Edison's laboratory.

November 6, 1888 - Benjamin Harrison is elected president.

**1889**

March 23, 1889 - President Benjamin Harrison open up Oklahoma lands to white settlement, beginning April 22, when the first of five land runs in the [Oklahoma land rush](http://americasbesthistory.com/abh-oklalr.html) started. More than 50,000 people waited at the starting line to race for one hundred and sixty acre parcels.

May 31, 1889 - The deadliest flood in American history occurs in Johnstown, Pennsylvania when 2,200 people perish from the water of the South Fork Dam after heavy rains cause its destruction.

June 3, 1889 - Running between the Willamette Falls and Portland, Oregon, a distance of fourteen miles, the first long distance electric power transmission line in the United States is completed.

The Yale University Bulldog, Handsome Dan, becomes the first animal to become a mascot in American sports.

**1890**

December 29, 1890 - The Battle of Wounded Knee, South Dakota, occurs in the last major battle between United States troops and Indians.  Hundreds of Indian men, women, and children are slain, along with twenty-nine soldiers.

**1891**

March 3, 1891 - The 51st Congress of the United States passes the International Copyright Act of 1891.

May 5, 1891 - Carnegie Hall, then known as Music Hall, opens its doors in New York with its first public performance under the guest conductor, Tchaikovsky.

May 20, 1891 - The first showing to a public audience, of Thomas A. Edison's new motion picture film occurred. Later that year, Thomas Edison would patent the radio.

**1892**

January 1, 1892 - [Ellis Island](http://americasbesthistory.com/abh-ellisisland.html), in New York Harbor, opens as the main east coast immigration center.

January 15, 1892 - James Naismith publishes the rules of basketball and the first official game of basketball is held five days later at the YMCA in Springfield, Massachusetts.  
  
October 12, 1892 - The first recital of the Pledge of Allegiance in U.S. public schools is done to mark the 400th anniversary of Columbus Day.  
  
November 8, 1892 - Grover Cleveland returns to the presidency.

**1893**

January 14-17, 1893 - The United States Marines, under the direction of U.S. government minister John L. Stevens, but no authority from the U.S. Congress, intervene in the affairs of the independent Kingdom of Hawaii, which culminated in the overthrow of the government of Hawaiian Queen Liliuokalani.

May 1, 1893 - The 1893 Chicago World Columbian Exposition, known affectionately as the "White City," opens to the public. The Ferris Wheel was introduced, a behemoth construction that held up to 2,160 riders.

May 5, 1893 - The New York Stock Exchange collapses, starting the financial panic of 1893.  It would lead to a four year period of depression.

November 7, 1893 - Women in Colorado are granted the right to vote.

**1894**

April 14, 1894 - The first public showing of Thomas Edison's kinetoscope motion picture is held.  Edison had invented the process seven years earlier.

September 7, 1894 - The fight between heavyweight boxing champ "Gentleman Jim" Corbett and Peter Courtney is caught on motion picture film by Thomas Edison at the "Black Maria" studio of his New Jersey laboratory.

**1895**

September 3, 1895 - The first professional football game is played in Latroble, Pennsylvania.  The Latrobe YMCA defeated the Jeannette Athletic Club 12-0.

November 5, 1895 - The first United States patent for the automobile, #549160, is granted to George B. Selden for his two stroke automobile engine.

**1896**

May 18, 1896 - Plessy versus Ferguson decision by the Supreme Court states that racial segregation is approved under the "separate but equal" doctrine.

November 1896 - Republican William McKinley is elected president.

April 6-15, 1896 - The first modern Olympic Games is held in Athens, Greece.  Thirteen nations participated, including the United States of America.

**1897**

1897 - The escalator is invented by Jesse W. Reno and installed as an amusement ride at Coney Island, New York.

September 1, 1897 - The era of the subway begins when the first underground public transportation in North America opens in Boston, Massachusetts.

**1898**

February 15, 1898 - The rallying cry, "Remember the Maine" is struck when the United States battleship Maine explodes and sinks under unknown causes in Havana Harbor, Cuba, killing two hundred and sixteen seamen.  The sentiment becomes a rallying point during the coming Spanish-American War.

December 10, 1898 - The Peace Treaty ending the Spanish-American War is signed in Paris.  The Spanish government agrees to grant independence to Cuba and cede Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines to the United States.

**1899**

The Open Door Policy with China is declared by the U.S. government in an attempt to open international markets and retain the integrity of China as a nation.

**1900**

June 1, 1900 - Carrie Nation continues her Temperance Movement to abolish the consumption of liquor when she demolishes twenty-five saloons in Medicine Lodge.

September 8, 1900 - The Galveston, Texas hurricane, with winds of 135 miles an hour, kills 8,000 people.

November 6, 1900 - President William McKinley wins his second term as president, this time with Theodore Roosevelt in the second spot on the ticket.

**1901**

January 10, 1901 - The first major oil discovery in Texas occurs near Spindletop in Beaumont.

September 6, 1901 - President William H. McKinley is shot at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York while shaking hands with fair visitors, following his speech at the event on President's Day the day before.  Anarchist Leon Czolgosz, an avowed anarchist, is arrested for the crime.

September 14, 1901 - Vice President Theodore Roosevelt is inaugurated as President upon the death of William McKinley from gunshot wounds sustained the week earlier.

**1902**

April 2, 1902 - The first movie theatre in the United States opens in Los Angeles, California.  It was known as the Electric Theatre.

Willis Haviland Carrier, a native of Angola, New York, invents the air conditioner

**1903**

January 18, 1903 - The first two-way wireless communication between Europe and the United States is accomplished by Guglielmo Marconi when he transmits a message from President Theodore Roosevelt to the King of England from a telegraph station in South Wellfleet, Massachusetts.

The first modern World Series of Major League Baseball is held between the American and National Leagues after two years of bitter rivalry.  It pitted the pennant winners of that year in a nine game series, with the National League winner, Pittsburgh, coming out on top 5-3 games over Boston.

December 17, 1903 - Inventors Wilbur and Orville Wright succeed in the first sustained and manned plane flight, taking the heavier-than-air machine through the winds of Kill Devil Hill, North Carolina, and man into an age of flight.

**1904**

May 5, 1904 - Cy Young, of the Boston Americans, pitches the first perfect game against the Philadelphia Athletics in the modern era of Major League baseball.

October 3, 1904 - The Daytona Educational and Industrial Training School for Negro Girls is opened by Mary McLeod Bethune in Daytona, Florida.  Bethune is regarded as a leading contributor to the education of African-American students in the early 20th century.

November 1904 - Theodore Roosevelt wins his first election for President after serving three years in the office due to the death of William McKinley.

The tractor is invented by American Benjamin Holt, using a catipillar track to spread the weight in heavy agricultural machinery.

**1905**

May 15, 1905 - The city of Las Vegas, Nevada is formed with the sale of one hundred and ten acres in the downtown area.

**1906**

April 18-19, 1906 - The San Francisco earthquake was estimated at 7.8 on the Richter scale.  Its proximity to the epicenter of the San Andreas Fault and the subsequent fire that followed the quake and aftershocks left 478 reported deaths, although estimates in the future peg that figure at nearly 3,000.

June 30, 1906 - The Pure Food and Drug Act and the Meat Inspection Act is passed.

**1907**

March 13, 1907 - Another financial crisis occurs in the business community with the beginning of the Financial Panic and Depression of 1907.

The United States "Great White Fleet" of sixteen battleships and twelve thousand men begin their first round the world cruise.

**1908**

January 1, 1908 - The tradition of dropping a ball in New York's Times Square to signal the beginning of the New Year is inaugurated.

September 27, 1908 - The first production Model T was built at the Ford plant in Detroit, Michigan

November 1908 - William Howard Taft is elected President.

**1909**

April 6, 1909 - Admiral Robert E. Peary, a Pennsylvania native, accompanied by four eskimos and a black man, Matthew Henson, arrives as the North Pole.

**1910**

February 8, 1910 - The Boy Scouts of America is founded.

**1911**

May 30, 1911 - The Indianapolis 500 auto race is run for the first time in Indianapolis, Indiana.

September 17, 1911 - The first transcontinental airline flight was begun in New York by C.P. Rodgers.  It would complete its journey to Pasadena, California after numerous stops and 82 hours and 4 minutes in the air on November 5.

**1912**

March 12, 1912 - The American Girl Guides, renamed the Girl Scouts one year later, is formed.

August 14, 1912 - The United States Marines are ordered to Nicaragua due to its default on loans to the United States and its European allies.

November 5, 1912 – Woodrow Wilson is elected president.

**1913**

February 1, 1913 - Grand Central Station, the world's largest rail terminal, opens in New York City.

February 3, 1913 - The 16th Amendment to the United States Constitution is ratified, allowing the Federal government treasury to impose an income tax.

December 1, 1913 - The first moving assembly line is introduced and adopted for mass production by the Ford Motor Company, allowing automobile construction time to decrease by almost 10 hours per vehicle.

**1914**

July 11, 1914 - Babe Ruth makes his major league debut.

August 4, 1914 - President Woodrow Wilson announces that the United States will stay officially neutral in the European conflict that would become World War I.